

BURTON-IN-KENDAL PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

It is essential for the Parish Council to deal with complaints about administration and procedures from service users or members of the public quickly, fairly and effectively. By following the agreed procedure, complainants can feel satisfied that at least their grievances have been properly and fully considered.

NB: Complaints about an employee of the Council will be dealt with as an employment matter. The complainant can be assured that the matter will be dealt with internally as such and appropriate action taken as required. Complaints about a councillor are now subject to the jurisdiction of the Standards Board. Complainants are advised to contact the appropriate body directly or the Monitoring Officer of South Lakeland District Council for further information about such complaints.

Before the Council Meeting to Consider the Complaint

- In the case of any complaint received by telephone or face-to-face that cannot be immediately rectified, the complainant should be asked to put the complaint in writing
- This may be dealt with by the Clerk or the Chairman
- The Clerk shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the Council
- The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representative as they wish
- Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence which they may wish to refer to at the meeting. The Council shall similarly provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting

At the Meeting

- The Council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public
- Chairman to introduce everyone and explain the procedure
- Complainant (or representative) to outline grounds for complaint
- Members to ask any questions of the complainant
- If relevant, Clerk or other proper officer to explain the Council's position
- Members to ask any questions of the Clerk or other proper officer
- Clerk or other proper officer and complainant to be offered the opportunity of last word (in this order)
- Clerk or other proper officer and complainant to be asked to leave the room while Members decide whether or not grounds for the complaint have been made. (If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties to be invited back)
- Clerk or other proper officer and complainant return to hear decision, or to be advised when a decision will be made

Decision confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of any action to be taken